CHECKLIST OF LAGOMORPHS (MAMMALIA: LAGOMORPHA)
OF SOUTH ASIA

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Abstract
A checklist of 14 species of lagomorphs belonging to three genera in two families, namely, Leporidae Fischer, 1817 (with five species in two genera) and Ochotonidae Thomas, 1897 (with nine species in one genus) known to occur in South Asia including India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka is provided.

Keywords
Checklist, Leporidae, Ochotonidae, Lagomorpha, Mammalia, South Asia

Introduction
The lagomorphs have for long been classified along with the rodents due to their close affinities. Earlier works including that of Linnaeus (1758) and Illiger (1811) did not clearly separate these two groups. Subsequent workers (including Waterhouse, 1842; Gervais, 1849; and Brandt, 1855) continued this trend but have also indicated the variations between the two groups at various levels. Simpson (1945) briefly traces the jaggered history of lagomorph taxonomy and remarks that it was Lilljeborg (1866) and subsequent authors who treated lagomorphs separately from rodents. Gidley (1912) proposed the name Order Lagomorpha Brandt, 1855 to include taxa that were earlier classified along with rodents under Order Duplicidentata Illiger, 1811. Later, Dice (1929) detailed about the sub family level categorization in family Leporidae Fischer, 1817 that was later rearranged by Burke (1941). The taxonomy of the family Ochotonidae Thomas, 1897 witnessed many changes over a period of time.

Detailed accounts of lagomorphs of the Indian subcontinent is available in Blyth (1863), Jerdon, (1874), Sterndale (1884), and Blanford (1891). As mentioned earlier, the last few decades witnessed numerous taxonomic advances with respect to lagomorphs (Forsyth, 1899; Lyon, 1904; Kloss, 1918; Ellerman & Morrison-Scott, 1951; Gureev, 1964; Corbet & Hill, 1980, 1986, 1991, 1992; Corbet, 1983; Angermann et al., 1990; Smith et al., 1990; Flux & Angermann, 1990; Hoffmann, 1993; Yu et al., 2000).

Recent checklists on Indian mammals (Nameer, 1998; Alfred et al., 2002) do not include all the South Asian taxa. Keeping this in view, and also considering non-existence of an updated checklist on lagomorphs of South Asia, we attempt to put together one such for this region including information on their synonyms, subspecies and distribution.

Methods
Like the earlier checklist on murids of South Asia prepared by Srinivasulu and Pradhan (2003), the present work also relies heavily on three major works, namely Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951), Corbet and Hill (1992), and Hoffmann (1993), and also a list prepared by Dr. Mike Jordan. We reviewed the major works by Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951, 1953); Phillips (1980); Chapman and Flux (1990); Corbet and Hill (1991, 1992); Hoffmann (1993); Roberts (1997) and Nowak (1999) to gain insights on the current taxonomic status of the lagomorphs occurring in the region. Besides these, we also referred numerous sources for information including Blyth (1863), Jerdon (1874), Anderson (1881), Sterndale (1884), Sclater (1891), Thomas (1922), Allen (1938), Bell et al. (1970), Abe (1971, 1982), Kawamichi (1971), Agrawal and Chakraborty (1971), Hassinger (1973), Mitchell (1975, 1978, 1981), Chakraborty (1975, 1983), Ghose (1978), Oliver (1978), Bell (1986), Angermann (1983).

Deriving information from above listed sources, we have listed the species of lagomorphs known to occur in South Asia including India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. This paper follows Srinivasulu and Pradhan (2003) for scientific names, synonyms and distribution informations in

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South Asia. This list is based on the best of the present knowledge on lagomorph diversity of the region to date.

**Results**

A total of 14 species of wild lagomorphs belonging to three genera of two families are recorded from South Asia. Five species belong to family *Leporidae* Fischer, 1817, and nine species belong to family *Ochotonidae* Thomas, 1897 (Table 1).

Of this diversity, only one species, namely *Caprolagus hispidus* (Pearson, 1839) is endemic to South Asia. Interestingly, no insular endemic lagomorph is known from the region.

The present known lagomorph diversity on record from South Asia is listed below. The synonyms provided are those applicable for the South Asian region. We have not listed extra-limital synonyms that may be valid for some taxon elsewhere.

### Table 1. Species diversity of Order Lagomorpha in South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Genus</th>
<th>No. of Species</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leporidae</td>
<td>Lepus</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Caprolagus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regional endemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochotonidae</td>
<td>Ochotona</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 2. Lepus nigricollis Cuvier, 1823


**Name:** Black-naped Hare/Indian Hare  
**Type locality:** Madras, India  
**Synonyms:**  
*Lepus nigricollis* Cuvier, 1823  
*Lepus ruficaudatus* Geoffroy, 1826  
*Lepus macrotus* Hodgson, 1840  
*Lepus aryabatensis* Hodgson, 1844 (nom. nud.)  
*Lepus tytleri* Tyler, 1854  
*Lepus dayanus* Blanford, 1874  
*Lepus joongshaiensis* Murray, 1854  
*Lepus simoxii* Wroughton, 1912  
*Lepus mahadeva* Wroughton & Ryley, 1913  
*Lepus singhala* Wroughton, 1915  
*Lepus rajput* Wroughton, 1918  
*Lepus cutchenis* Kloss, 1918  
*Lepus sadiya* Kloss, 1918  

**Subspecies:**  
*Lepus nigricollis nigricollis* Cuvier, 1823  
*Lepus nigricollis ruficaudatus* Geoffroy, 1826  
*Lepus nigricollis dayanus* Blanford, 1874  

**Distribution:** Throughout India; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Sri Lanka; Nepal; probably also in Bhutan.

**Comments:** Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951), and, Corbet and Hill (1992) treated the taxon *singhala* Wroughton, 1915 as a subspecies of *Lepus nigricollis* Cuvier, 1823. However, it is treated as a synonym by Hoffmann (1993).

### 3. Lepus oiostolus Hodgson, 1840


**Name:** Woolly Hare  
**Type locality:** Southern Tibet, Xizang, China  
**Synonyms:**  
*Lepus oiostolus* Hodgson, 1840  
*Lepus pallasii* Hodgson, 1842  
*Lepus hyspius* Blanford, 1875  

**Subspecies:** None.  
**Distribution:** Ladakh and Sikkim in India, Nepal and probably also in Bhutan.
Comments: None.

4. Lepus tolai Pallas, 1778
Name: Tolai Hare
Type locality: valley of Selenga River, Russia
Synonyms: ?Lepus biddulphi Blanford, 1877
Subspecies: None.
Distribution: Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in India.
Comments: Belongs to subgenus Lepus capensis Linnaeus, 1758 that was later synonymized by Corbet (1978). However, in the recent years these two are considered specifically distinct (Hoffmann, 1993). We put on record this taxon from India following the record of Lepus biddulphi Blanford, 1877 described basing on a specimen collected from Yasin, Gilgit in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. This taxon had been earlier synonymized with Lepus capensis tibetanus Waterhouse, 1871 by Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) but later has been synonymized with Lepus tolai Pallas, 1778 by Hoffmann (1993).

Genus Caprolagus Blhy, 1845
A monotypic genus restricted in distribution to South Asia.

5. Caprolagus hispidus (Pearson, 1839)
Name: Hispid Hare/Assam Rabbit
Type locality: North Assam, India
Synonyms: Lepus hispidus Pearson, 1839
Subspecies: None.
Distribution: Endemic to the region. Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam in India; Nepal; Bangladesh; probably also in Bhutan.
Comments: Monotypic.

Family: Ochotonidae Thomas, 1897
Genus Ochotona, 1795
Pikas
Yu et al. (2000) worked out the molecular systematics of this genus. Two subgenera, namely Ochotona Link, 1795 and Pika Lacépède, 1799 are recognized. This genus is widespread and recorded in hilly areas of Eurasia and western North America. It is represented by nine species in two subgenera in the region.

6. Ochotona curzoniae (Hodgson, 1858)
Name: Black-lipped/Plateau Pika
Type locality: Chumbi Valley, S. Tibet, China
Synonyms: Lagomys curzoniae Hodgson, 1858
Ochotona dauurica curzoniae (Hodgson, 1858)
Subspecies: None.
Distribution: Jammu & Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in India and Pakistan.
Comments: Belongs to subgenus Pikas. Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) and subsequent authors treated it as a distinct species.
10. *Ochotona macrotis* (Günther, 1875)
**Name:** Large-eared Pika
**Type locality:** Doba, C. Tibet, China
**Synonyms:**
- *Lagomys macrotis* Günther, 1875
- *Lagomys auritus* Blanford, 1875
- *Lagomys griseus* Blanford, 1875
- *Ochotona wollastoni* Thomas & Hinton, 1922
- *Ochotona roylei baltina* Thomas, 1922
**Subspecies:**
- *Ochotona macrotis macrotis* Günther, 1875
- *Ochotona macrotis wardi* Ogilby, 1839
**Distribution:** Jammu & Kashmir in India; Nepal; Bhutan. Description: Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) treated this taxon as a subspecies of *Ochotona roylei* (Ogilby, 1839), while Hoffmann (1993) following Weston (1982) and Feng et al. (1986) consider it as a distinct species. The taxon *Ochotona roylei baltina* Thomas, 1922 has been synonymized with *Ochotona macrotis* following Hoffmann (1993).

11. *Ochotona nubrica* Thomas, 1922
**Name:** Nubra Pika
**Type locality:** Tuggur, Nubra Valley, Ladak, Jammu & Kashmir, India
**Synonyms:**
- *Lagomys nubrica* Thomas, 1922
**Subspecies:**
- None.
**Distribution:** Jammu & Kashmir in India; Nepal; Bhutan. Description: Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) list two subspecies from the region. Gureev (1964), Corbet (1978) and Roberts (1997) listed it under *Ochotona roylei* (Ogilby, 1839), while Hoffmann (1993) following Weston (1982) and Feng et al. (1986) consider it as a distinct species. The taxon *Ochotona roylei baltina* Thomas, 1922 has been synonymized with *Ochotona macrotis* following Hoffmann (1993).

12. *Ochotona roylei* (Ogilby, 1839)
**Name:** Royle’s Pika
**Type locality:** Choor Mtns., Punjab, India
**Synonyms:**
- *Lagomys roylei* Ogilby, 1839
- *Lagomys nepalensis* Hodgson, 1841
- *Ochotona wardi* Bonhote, 1904
- *Ochotona angulatawa* Biswas & Khajuria, 1955
- *Ochotona mitchelli* Agrawal & Chakraborty, 1971
**Subspecies:**
- *Ochotona roylei roylei* (Ogilby, 1839)
- *Ochotona roylei wardi* Bonhote, 1904
**Distribution:** Jammu & Kashmir, Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhal in India; Pakistan; Nepal. Description: Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) treated the taxon *Lagomys hodgsoni* Blyth, 1841 as a subspecies of *Ochotona roylei* (Ogilby, 1839). However, the aforementioned taxon was assigned to *Ochotona nubrica* Thomas 1922 by Hoffmann (1993). The taxon *Ochotona roylei baltina* Thomas, 1922 listed earlier under this taxon had been synonymized with *Ochotona macrotis* (Günther, 1875) (see comments therein) by Hoffmann (1993).

13. *Ochotona rufescens* (Gray, 1842)
**Name:** Afghan Pika
**Type locality:** Near Babur’s tomb, Kabul, Afghanistan
**Synonyms:**
- *Lagomys rufescens* Gray, 1842
- *Ochotona rufescens* vutruna Thomas, 1920
**Subspecies:**
- *Ochotona rufescens rufescens* (Gray, 1842)
- *Ochotona rufescens vutruna* Thomas, 1920
**Distribution:** Baluchistan in Pakistan. Description: Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951) included *Ochotona rufescens vutruna* Thomas, 1920 that was reported from Kelat, Baluchistan which they remarked to be either an aberrant form or may not belong to *Ochotona rufescens* (Gray, 1842). Hoffmann (1993) synonymized *Ochotona rufescens vutruna* Thomas, 1920 with *Ochotona rufescens* (Gray, 1842).

14. *Ochotona thibetana* (Milne-Edwards, 1871)
**Name:** Manipur Pika
**Type locality:** Moupin, Sichuan, China
**Synonyms:**
- *Lagomys thibetanus* Milne-Edwards, 1871
- *Ochotona thibetana* deWinton & Styan, 1899
- *Ochotona hodgsoni* Bonhote, 1905
- *Ochotona sikimaria* Thomas, 1922
**Subspecies:**
- *Ochotona thibetana thibetana* Thomas, 1871
- *Ochotona thibetana sikimaria* Thomas, 1922
**Distribution:** Sikkim in India; Bhutan. Description: Hoffmann (1993) remarks that this taxon had been formerly included by various authors in either *Ochotona forresti* Thomas, 1923 or *Ochotona nubrica* Thomas, 1922. The isolated taxon, named *Ochotona sikimaria* Thomas, 1922, earlier assigned to *Ochotona cansus* Lyon, 1707 by Feng and Kao (1974) but transferred to *Ochotona thibetana* (Milne-Edwards, 1871) by Smith et al. (1990) concerns us.

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References

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